

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph commencing at page 3, line 14 as follows:

— ~~In~~ In accordance with yet another aspect of the invention there is provided an apparatus for decoding information encoded by the emission characteristics of quantum dots in a carrier medium, comprising a light source for exciting said quantum dots to emit light; a detector for detecting said emitted light; and a processor for extracting said encoded information from the emission characteristics of said quantum dots. —

Please amend the paragraph commencing at page 5, line 1 as follows:

— The commercial availability of QDs with different wavelengths provides a great number of combinations of wavelength and intensity. For example, an encoder using 6-wavelength / 10-intensity QD ~~benas~~ has a theoretical coding capacity of about one million discrimination code. The coding space can be even expanded by utilizing a third property that can be decoded (e.g., the geometry of the info-drop decoded by a CCD camera). --

Please amend the paragraph commencing at page 7, line 17 as follows:

— An apparatus for retrieving the information hidden in an info-drop is shown in Figure 2. An exciting light source 10 is provided by a Light Emitting Diode (LED) laser or mercury lamp, which has the broad-band in the near-UV range (330-385 nm). A bunch of optical fibers 12 guides the exciting light to an info-drop 14 bonded on the surface of an object ~~4816~~, such as an ID card, to be identified. The fluorescent light emitted by the quantum is fed to a spectrum sensor 20 by a detecting fiber 22. The spectral data created by the sensor is further delivered to an intelligent instrument, e.g. a micro-processor or a PC, which eventually extracts the information originally coded in the info-drop: —